

July 26, 2010

San Diego Water Quality Board
Re: Tentative Order No. R9-2010-0016

Dear Board:

I have been involved in trying to find a solution to the erosion problems in the unincorporated hills of Temecula for almost three years.

I live in Rancho Glenoaks, a community of about 8 miles of dirt roads within approximately 640 acres. These roads were dedicated to the County of Riverside in 1982 by the developer. The unprofessional continuous grading of these roads by our HOA road committee has caused silt and sediment to flow through blue line tributaries to San Gertrudis Creek, down to DePortola and into the Santa Margarita watershed.

I was alerted to this problem when my own blue line creek bed habitat was destroyed by sand and silt. The road adjoining my property eroded into the creek and debris and vegetation clogged the undersized, poorly installed culvert created under the road by the original developer.

In my quest for a solution to the damage that was being done to my oaks, native habitat and environment, I contacted the County of Riverside. I believe I spoke to more than one person in every department of the County. I was told to contact Fish & Game, Flood Control, RCD, etc., etc. – always reaching a dead-end. (I even contacted the EPA and every environmental agency I could find!) I was told not to contact water quality as the County would be fined for allowing this erosion to continue. Every agency continually told me there was nothing they could do – even as I contacted them again and again. I still can not understand what any of these state and federal agencies are about. They seem to be just words and ordinances that mean nothing.

Finally, last year, Code Enforcement contacted the board of directors of our homeowner's association and tried to educate them on the importance of BMPs; however, oaks are still dying and sediment from grading of the roads is still being pushed into our many watersheds as the road committee continues to grade as they always do - not even recognizing the pollution they are causing to our stream channels. Our tributaries flow to a 100-year flood zone that is continuing to be destroyed. This watercourse/flood zone is on private property. Inhabitants of this community drive through this watercourse, crossing a creek bed, having no concern for the destruction they are continuing to cause.

I contacted an agency called Pacific Watershed Associates, who are hydrologists that specialize in assessing, redesigning and repairing road-related erosion problems, and offer environmental services, with funding being administered by state and federal grants. PWA states: "These programs can cover the costs of both the assessment and implementation"; however, I have been unable to convince the BOD of our HOA that we

need professional help. They have told me that I cannot represent this HOA, and it is my understanding that I cannot apply for grants as an individual.

I have now found that the new requirements for Copermittees include a draft for “Unpaved Roads Construction and Maintenance” that spells out “sediment control measures during construction and maintenance activities on unpaved roads, including developing and implementing appropriate training and technical assistance resources”.

This has given me new hope that these hills have a chance of being returned to the once beautiful land that I loved so many years ago. Is it possible that this new order can require help from the County to solve the erosion problems in Rancho Glenoaks, as well as others in the same situation as I? I truly hope it can happen. The County and environmental agencies need to take responsibility.

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